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A NEW WHITE FLY FUNGUS.

BY H. S. FAWCETT.

A new fungus that gives promise of being very effective in killing the larvae of the White Fly has recently been discovered. It was found by Prof. P. H. Rolfs in two different groves in the Sub-Peninsula. Attention was called to it from the fact that 70 to 90 per cent. of the larvae in recently infested trees were found to be dead. This led to further investigation as to the cause of the mortality of the White Fly larvae, with the result that a fungus, not heretofore noticed, was found. On leaves sent in later from one of the same groves, almost every larva had been killed. The same fungus was found to be present on White Fly larvae sent in on citrus leaves from the Manatee River region a few days later.

NAME AND APPEARANCE OF THE FUNGUS.

This new White Fly parasite, which may be called the "WHITE FRINGE" FUNGUS, appears to belong to a genus known scientifically as Microcera. It is related to the Red Headed fungus (Sphaerostilbe coccophila) that is parasitic on San Jose Scale and on various citrus scale insects, but its general appearance is very different.

The White Fringe fungus is not at all conspicuous to the unaided eye, as are the Red, Yellow and Brown fungi, but under the hand lens it may be made out. It appears as a very delicate white fringe coming out from the margin of the larva. If the leaves are picked and allowed to dry the fringe disappears. The dead larvae become white and papery, and later often present a very slight pinkish appearance.

EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE.

Our experiments, conducted at Gainesville, showed that in two weeks from the time the spores were introduced into white fly infested trees, the fungus was very evident upon previously healthy white fly

larvae. Additional experiments in the laboratory showed that the spores of the White Fringe fungus germinate much more quickly than those of either the Red or the Yellow fungus.

How far the use of this fungus will prove to be of practical value in controlling the White Fly is yet to be determined by further experiment on a larger scale. If, however, the fungus continues to be as active as it has recently shown itself to be, it will certainly prove of great value in further checking the ravages of this troublesome pest.

HOW TO USE THE FUNGUS.

Persons finding this fungus in parts of their groves, can distribute it into portions of the grove in which the White Fly is perfectly healthy, by taking leaves containing larvae already infested with fungus, and pinning them into trees where the larvae are not yet diseased. In doing this we would advise that the fungus-containing surface of the detached leaves be pinned in contact with the healthy larvae of the others.

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